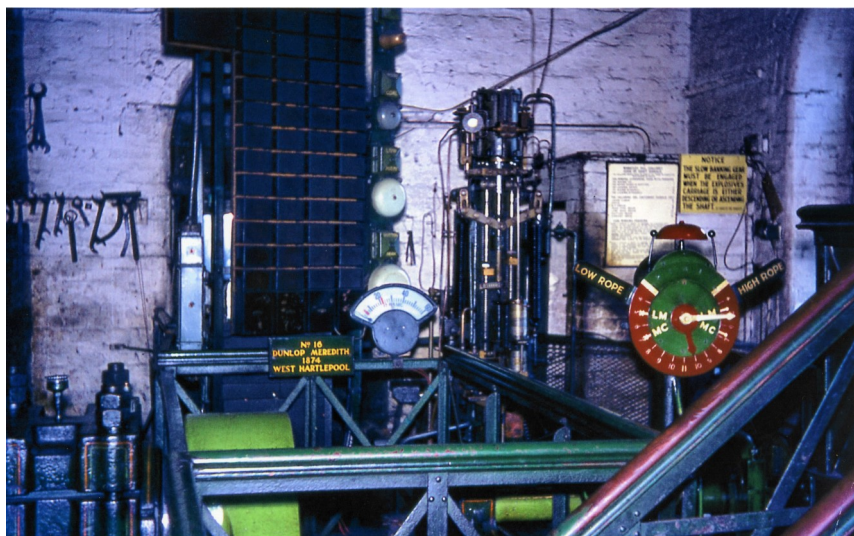
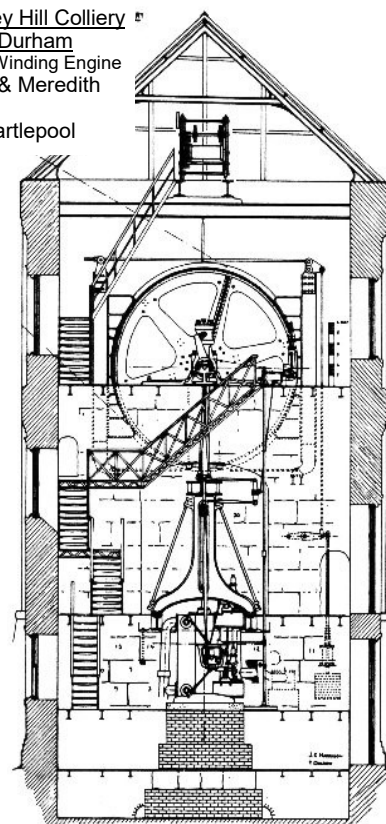


THE WHEATLEY HILL WINDING ENGINE

(some information from John K Harrison, 1970)



Wheatley Hill Colliery
County Durham
Vertical Winding Engine
Dunlop & Meredith
1874
West Hartlepool



Wheatley Hill Colliery was lucky to have two very fine winding engines – a Robey (horizontal) made in Lincolnshire and a Dunlop & Meredith (vertical) made at West Hartlepool that was second hand when it arrived at Wheatley Hill and for many years the Dunlop and Meredith engine stood in the colliery yard and was finally re-erected at Wheatley Hill in 1900.

The engine in its final form performed its duties efficiently. It did all the heavy winding at the colliery in spite of the installation of a second engine - a horizontal Robey - and in the memory of the winding man, Mr. Charlie Daly, was never out of work except when servicing and repairs were carried out.

Attempts were made to preserve this engine by Mr. Frank Atkinson of the Bowes Museum, for the projected open-air museum at Beamish, but the removal of such a large piece of equipment would have been a major project in its own right and proved to be beyond the means of the project.

When the History Club first started in 1995, our member, Malcolm Roberts offered to show a screening of a cine film he had taken of the winding engine working, just before the pit closed. On the night of our meeting, we couldn't believe the number of men who turned up to see the film. Although Malcolm's film was excellent, he was the first to admit he didn't know much about the engine and would be unable to answer questions. The fitter responsible for carrying out safety checks and maintenance of the engine, Gordon Carr, was also at the meeting, and whilst not being noted for his public speaking, was able to answer the many questions that the film had generated by those present.

Malcolm kindly allowed us to have the cine film converted to a video and later Bill Burrell from the Heritage Centre converted it to a dvd, however, when we decided to re-visit the film again for our February Zoom meeting, it wouldn't play through a modern computer. We asked Lonely Tower Film and Media who have become good friends of The History Club through "Beyond Praise", the Thomas Kenny film and "We All Served"—about the village's contributions to First World War if they could help and they have done an excellent job. The film has been updated to the latest format, a new soundtrack has been added and the commentary of the safety checks required by the National Coal Board was also added which had been recorded onto a spool to spool tape recorder by Gordon Carr at the time he was carrying out the checks in the 1960's.

Our February Zoom meeting showed the film and 22 people attended from all over County Durham and beyond. George Cook gave an excellent introduction and Gordon Tempest shared his knowledge of working as an apprentice fitter on the winding engine. We received some excellent feedback from those at the meeting. The film is now on the History Club website if you would like to see it.

CONTACT DETAILS

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ZOOM MEETINGS FOR 2021

All Meetings Start at 11.00am

28 April	Transformation of the High Street 1800-1900	M Peagam
26 May	The Demoniacs A Northern Hell Fire Club	T Nicholson
30 June	Charles W Vane Tempest 3rd Marquess of Londonderry	G Morris

Owen Rowland

You will not be surprised to hear that we have received many comments about Owen's death as a result of the tribute which was included with our January newsletter. Owen was highly regarded by all who knew him as was the high-quality work he carried out on behalf of The History Club. He was at the forefront of our research and other activities and those of The Heritage Society until his illness started in about 2015. He will be sadly missed by us all.

The History Club and The Heritage Society joined forces to send a cheque for £100 to The Alzheimer's Society in his memory. RIP Owen.



**We have received our first payment from the above fund and it was over £1000
Thank you to everyone to chose us**

THANK YOU

The History Club committee would like to thank those of you have continued to pay your annual subscription even though we are not meeting up. A further thanks to those of you who have made donations. We are very grateful. The work behind the scenes continues and we hope to be able to meet up in Wheatley House later this year.

In the meantime, the Zoom meetings are attracting a lot of people and if you would like to take part please let one of us know so that we can advise you on using Zoom.

THE NATIONAL COAL BOARD Pay Advice Sundries

Nature of extras that can be claimed for on top of regular wage and which will appear on pay note
(These items apply to all pits under the management of the National Coal Board and may not be relevant at all pits)

Carrying Powder
Emptying Chemical Buckets
Cleaning Culverts
Clipping Ponies
Cleaning Sump
Cleaning Boilers
Slurry
Cleaning Washery Buckets
Power Loaders Task Bonus (proportionate basis)
Calling Out Allowance
Wet
Height Money
Acting Competent Person

Rope Allowance
Guaranteed Wage
Consultative Committee
Education
First Aid Class—Training & Duties
Medical and Rediological Research
Nystagmus Clinic
Rescue
Rent
Defence—Civil Defence
Firefighting Competitions
Annual & Statutory Holiday Pay
Boatage

*The following interview is in the archives of the Imperial War Museum
Thank you to History Club member Tom Tunney for bringing it to our attention*

INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE DENNIS ELLIOTT OF WHEATLEY HILL BORN 6 SEPTEMBER 1913 AT SUNDERLAND STREET, WHEATLEY HILL

EDUCATION CONTINUED

The main sport for boys during the games lesson was football, but once a year the village held a four-mile race, on the nearest Saturday to May Day and the school had to send two representatives to run in this race. The boys would be taken from the year group who would be leaving school that year. In order to choose who would be the representatives, a few weeks before the big day, practice races were held during games lessons, around the four-mile route.

In 1927 when I was in my last year, I had to take part in these trial runs. On the first run, I took the lead just after we left the school and returned to school well before any of the others. I was changed and back in my school clothes before the second lad got back but the Head Master wouldn't believe that I'd completed the race and made us do another practice race with teachers at significant points around the route.

Once again I got back to school first. I changed into my school clothes and was walking out of school to go home when the second lad came in. I was to represent the school at the May Day event. The other lads were betting on me to win the race on the day.

The Monday before the big event, I was sitting on our kitchen floor in Sunderland Street rocking my little brother in his rocker chair. He was 15 months old and full of giggles, as I rocked him to and from. Suddenly the baby collapsed in his chair. My grandfather sent for the doctor, but the baby was dead. The doctor said he died of convulsions.

The rules surrounding a death in the family in the mining village was that no-one from the household attended school or went to work until after the funeral. The day after the funeral, was the day before the big race, and I asked my parents if I could run. They said if it was alright with the school, it was alright with them.

I went along to speak with the games master and he said, "No you can't run, you haven't been to school this week but if one of the two lads who is representing the school wants to drop out to give you his place, then you can run". Of course none of them wanted to give their place up. The boy who got my place was last on the day.

The same master said to me a few weeks later, "I know you're due to leave school in a few weeks time, but if you stay on until Christmas I'll make sure you play football for the school team". I told him I couldn't stay at school as my family were relying on me getting a job and help out with the family budget.

That season, Wheatley Hill School team had one of their best seasons and were beaten only once - 4-0 - by a Hartlepool team. They were playing in the Kelloe Schools League.

There were lots of football teams in Wheatley Hill at that time. Every organisation had a team – the pubs, the clubs, church, chapels, pit, school and they were all well supported.

Once you got to the boys school or girls school, one boy and one girl was chosen to go to the Grammar School. They chose the cleverest, but it wasn't always the cleverest that went, as often families couldn't afford the uniform and other expenses needed for the Grammar School. A good example of this was Joseph Elliott (no relation to me), he lived a couple of streets away from me. The Head Master knew Joe was a brilliant mathematician and wanted him to go to the Grammar School. He spoke to the parents but they couldn't afford to send him. The Head Master offered to pay for Joe's uniform himself out of his own pocket, but the parents still refused, realising that other expenses would crop up that they couldn't afford.

Joe started work at the pit when he left school but joined the Royal Navy during World War 2 as a Petty Officer Writer and died with a brain tumour as a young man.

(to be continued)



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Mon—Thurs

8.30am—8.45pm

Fri—8.30am—7.45pm

Available for functions outside of these hours—please ask for details

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